

The Book Club of California
**Quarterly
News-Letter**

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Founded in 1912, THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA is a non-profit organization of book lovers and collectors who have a special interest in Pacific Coast history, literature, and fine printing. Its chief aims are to further the interests of book collectors and to promote an understanding and appreciation of fine books.

The Club is limited to 1,000 members. When vacancies exist, membership is open to all who are in sympathy with its aims and whose applications are approved by the Board of Directors. Regular membership involves no responsibilities beyond payment of the annual dues. Dues date from the month of the member's election. Regular membership is \$55; Sustaining \$75; Patron \$150.

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Bewick in Bas-Relief

by Joanne Sonnichsen

*Reprinted from The Private Library, Fourth Series, Volume 103, Autumn 1997,
by the kind permission of David Chambers, editor.*

THE PROJECT BEGAN SIMPLY ENOUGH, as a straightforward full leather binding for The Book Club of California's publication of *Thomas Bewick and the Fables of Aesop* to be bound in burgundy *chagrin*. Then my client, Gerry Cole, mentioned that she had two original Bewick blocks and wondered if I might be able to use them in the binding in some way.

Several possibilities came to mind. We could ink the blocks, print them on small rectangles of paper, and mount the rectangles on the cover. We could change to a half-leather format, print the blocks on a larger piece of paper, and mount that paper on the boards. Inasmuch as there were already two Bewick prints in the text block, neither of those solutions seemed attractive.

The alternative was to use the blocks to stamp on the leather itself. Using a modern metal stamp, I experimented to see how much detail I could retain by stamping directly on to the leather. That experiment worked well, but it worked using a metal die, not a 200-year old block.

The possibility of damaging the block was daunting. I began by asking printers what they would recommend. The most common suggestion was to encase the block into a frame so that the pressure could be distributed more evenly. Stamping in leather, incidentally, is done differently from printing, in that the dampened leather is put face up on a pressing board with the block on top, and then pressed in a 'nipping' press, rather than placing the block (or type) face up with the paper on top and then run through the printing press. Still, I was reluctant to try.

Fortunately I mentioned my problems (with the solutions I had received to date) to David Chambers. He, very generously, offered to lend me a 'non-Bewick' block dating from the same period. This block could be used for experimentation, and, should the worst scenario happen, at least a crack in this block would not be as grave as a crack in a Bewick block.

Even so, it was with great trepidation that I dampened a piece of burgundy *chagrin*, centered it on the pressing board, put the Chambers block face down, put

the whole into the press, and brought down the upper plate. After ten long seconds I released the upper plate, took out the board, and removed the block. It worked so well, one would have thought wood engravings had been made to be pressed into leather.

The detail was all there, but there was still a problem. The darkness of the leather combined with the grain pattern of the goat skin made it difficult to see the small details of the image. Obviously a lighter and different leather would yield better results – ideally a natural calf. I did not, however, have such a skin in stock, and I rarely buy leather sight unseen.

Fortunately I had come to this stage of the project shortly before leaving for the seminar held in conjunction with the opening of the exhibition of the bindings submitted for the first Tri-Centennial Helen DeGolyer Awards held at the Bridwell Library, Southern Methodist University, in Dallas. As part of the seminar, Mark Lamb of Harmitan leathers had brought a selection of Nigerian skins, and one of them was just the color and texture I wanted.

Because the book was not to be boxed, it was important that the leather panels be recessed to avoid damage when shelved. Before the book was covered, I removed 0.3 mm of paper from the boards in the areas where the panels were to go. (Most text papers average 0.2 mm.) Then, because the *chagrin* had been pared to 0.8 mm, I pared the calf to 0.5 mm. I removed another 0.1 mm from the *chagrin* in the areas where the panels were to be placed. Thus, adding the 0.3 mm from the boards, the 0.3 from the lesser thickness of the calf, and the 0.1 additional paring of the *chagrin*, the calf panels are able to sit 0.7 mm lower than the surrounding leather – not enough to be objectionably noticeable, but enough to protect the panels from abrasion.

The panels are further protected by an application of ‘*Cire 213*,’ a clear conservation wax made by the *Bibliothèque Nationale* of France.

I had wanted to complete the panels off the book, but I found that the moisture from the PVA-wheat-starch mix I used to mount them on the book had softened the images slightly. There was nothing for it but to put a pressing tin between the cover and the text block, *carefully* replace each wood block on to its image, and re-press each block on the book.

The completed panels not only personalize the binding for its owner (who also marbled the endpapers) but the resultant bas-reliefs offer a new way of looking at the remarkable work of Thomas Bewick.

The Tragedy of Coloma

In honor of the Sesquicentennial of the Gold Discovery—only a little late—the Quarterly News-Letter is delighted to reprint, with the permission of the proprietor of the In-Time Press, this heart-stopping tale, many of whose actors were eminent members of The Book Club: George Harding, Joseph Henry Jackson, Francis Farquhar, and Oscar Lewis. For readers who have lived sheltered lives, we note that ECV stands for E Clampus Vitus, but beyond remarking that it is celebrated in song and story, your editors are reluctant to define this benevolent confraternity. A Noble Grand Humbug leads each chapter.

•{ CHAPTER I }•

FRANCIS FARQUHAR THOUGHT UP THE IDEA of a special ECV first-day cover for use with the Coloma commemorative stamp, and Ed Grabhorn proceeded to print up a supply. Part of the envelopes were left at the Book Club office and such members as were interested were invited to address them, with the understanding that they would be carried to Coloma, stamped there and mailed. About half a dozen took advantage of this deal, addressing a total of about thirty envelopes. (Thus ends Chapter I - background material.)

•{ CHAPTER II }•

On January 23, the thirty (or thereabouts) addressed envelopes, plus fifty or sixty others, were gathered up and rushed to Coloma by Harding, Jackson, Farquhar & Lewis. On the night of the 23rd the envelopes were deposited for safekeeping in the vault of the First National Bank at Placerville, and at daybreak (or shortly later) on the 24th they were removed and carried—in an armored car—to Coloma for stamping, mailing and glory. (So far so good; but from here on in the plot gets complicated.)

•{ CHAPTER III }•

There was, as you may have heard, a slight traffic congestion in and about Coloma on the morning of the 24th. The envelope-bearing car had to be parked a mile from the village, and Lewis—clearly the most reliable of the group—took custody of the package of envelopes, addressed and unaddressed. On the outskirts of the town our party came on a car stalled in the traffic. Inside the car were a number of dubious looking characters, including L. Stopple and E. Kahn. Just as our group was on the point of passing safely, a window of the car was lowered and Kahn made known a desire of the inmates for some of the ECV covers.

*This is a true, full and unvarnished account
of what future generations of philatelists will
undoubtedly refer to (in hushed tones) as the*

TRAGEDY OF COLOMA



Lewis, accommodating as usual, hastily dipped into the package, pulled out a handful of the envelopes, passed them through to Kahn, and was swept on with the crowd.

•{ CHAPTER IV }•

(Now we approach the climax; soft music with this one.) Lewis, &c. find their way to the Coloma Post Office, buy stamps and prepare to mail the addressed covers. Package is opened. Envelopes inside are all unaddressed. Great light dawns. Lewis, in his haste back there down the road, has passed out the addressed covers. Wonders what chance there is to find Kahn in that crowd of 30,000. Hopes for the best. Expects the worst. Has a beer. Has another. Forgets the whole business. Has two beers.

•{ EPILOGUE }•

Came the dawn—four days later. Kahn called up. Their gang was headed out of town that morning when the envelopes were gathered in. On finding them addressed, Edgar passed them on to a passing friend who was headed toward town and asked him to turn them over to Lewis, Jackson, Harding, Farquhar. Here's the pay-off: Did the guy find any of us? NO! Did he mail the covers? NO! What he did do was to bring them back to S.F. and turn them over to Edgar, unstamped, unmailed, unhonored....

•{ A PARTING WORD }•

And that, boys & girls, is why Lewis has cleared out for parts unknown, far, far beyond the point where he can be reached even by 1948 Coloma Commemorative issue, with or without an ECV envelope....

*With the kind permission of Oscar Lewis,
this unpublished manuscript
has been printed by the In-Time Press
to commemorate the occasion of
The Ex-Humbug Orates on E Clampus Vitus
(Al Shumate doing the honors)
at the Roxburghe Club, January 19, 1971.*

The Quarterly News-Letter hopes that the above is not more than usually obscure. "Bliss it was in that dawn to be alive...." We understand that ECV members will see the events as merely typical.

~Reviews:

Used and Rare: Travels in the Book World. By Lawrence and Nancy Goldstone. St. Martin's Press, New York. 215 pages; \$11.95

This slim paperback is the story of a love affair, but not one of love at first sight, nor of puppy love. Nancy and Lawrence Goldstone were at least thirty-somethings when they belatedly "fell" for old and rare books. Both were already reasonably bookish, but they were acquainted only with new, in-print books before they took the plunge.

Incredibly naive at the start, the Goldstones worked their way from small used-book stores in the Berkshires to genuine antiquarian shops and local book fairs, then to posh rare book dealers in Boston, Chicago, and New York. That was the extent of the travels in their subtitle. Their adventures were rather modest, too, culminating with attendance at a New York Antiquarian Book Fair in the 7th Regiment Armory and participation in a book auction. Clearly cowed by the hauteur of some bibliopoles whom they met, they chose Swann's over Sotheby's or Christie's because the former's catalogue was cheaper than the others, and they hoped not to be intimidated or embarrassed by their "betters."

This is a light-hearted and humorous account of the couple's expedition into the *terra incognita* of book collecting. It is written in a journalistic, almost conversational style that makes this slim volume closer to *84 Charing Cross Road* than to Nicholas Basbanes's *A Gentle Madness*. It will be a pleasant reading experience, especially for beginning bibliophiles, but even gray-haired veterans will enjoy the volume's comments on the book trade and its cast of characters.

And *characters* the latter were. The authors are not harsh critics, but they do name names (and ones familiar to readers of the *Quarterly*). The two green collectors found many booksellers to be eccentric in manner and dress. Indeed, the Goldstones suggest that the uniform-of-the-day for most men in the trade was jeans or ill-fitting khakis, plaid shirts, bushy beards, and pony tails, the latter sometimes combined with bald pates. Some dealers were friendly; a few were snobish/snotty; only one was downright rude. The worst runaround that the neophytes got was not the work of a bookseller at all, but of a special collections librarian in a major public library.

The Goldstones learned all about points and states, association interest, and the importance of condition. After collecting bargain-priced books that they would treasure for the rest of their lives, they became infected with the virus of first edition envy. They began buying expensive modern firsts.

But, finally, they became disillusioned by this high end of the book trade. It was not just its excessive commercialism, but the fact that the big money people, such as Hollywood celebrities, were fixing the “value” of high-priced firsts that were currently in vogue. And so, wisely, they retreated, going back to the shelves of o.p. books that they both loved and could afford.

RICHARD H. DILLON

Fire and Gold, the San Francisco Story. Charles A. Fracchia. Heritage Media Corporation, Encino, California, 1996. Softcover, 208 pages. 2nd Edition

City By the Bay: A History of San Francisco 1945–Present. Charles A. Fracchia. Heritage Media Corporation, Encino, California, 1997. Hardcover, 431 pages

Few historians have, like William Camden, the father of modern history, “been there, saw it.” Professor Camden, whom Queen Elizabeth I favored with her patronage, founded the chair of history at Oxford University, still known as the Camden professorship. A member of the faculty of the University of San Francisco, and a Book Club member, Charles A. Fracchia has chronicled in these two large, colorful and lavishly illustrated books the political, cultural, and commercial growth of our city. The first of these – *Fire and Gold, the San Francisco Story* – was published by the Heritage Media Corporation of Encino, California, in 1996. The text may derive from the author’s well-attended lectures – it begins “about 500 B.C. when the Amerindians” took up residence in this region and ends with the social upheavals and “political cacophony” of the 1980s and Robert Eplett’s photographs of the Loma Prieta earthquake. As in William Camden’s *Britannia*, issued in 1586, Professor Fracchia eschews footnotes and bibliographic entries, but, unlike Camden, Fracchia, aided by Robert MacKimmie, curator of photography at the California Historical Society, does provide the reader with a visual history.

I looked in vain for the women who helped create San Francisco. Our first poet laureate, Ina Coolbrith, and novelists Gertrude Atherton or Kay Boyle are not included among the literati. Lola Montez, Lillie Coit, Lotta Crabtree, and Alice B. Toklas are absent from the long list of glitterati. Generous Alma Speckles and intellectual Julia Morgan have been ignored. Isadora Duncan, the barefoot dancer who changed the very nature of dance, is not found worthy of mention. Alas, even Concepción Arguello, first among San Franciscans to take the veil, is mentioned merely as having facilitated a commercial enterprise by her ill-fated engagement to Russian Baron Nicolas Rezanov. In all fairness, an old photograph of our own

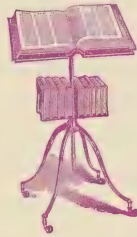
Diane Feinstein, “a politician to the core,” and two dear old ladies gesticulating in front of their earthquake-damaged homes provide some feminine presence.

A second book, a glamorous coffee-table hard-cover volume, *City By the Bay: A History of San Francisco 1945–Present*, was issued by the same publisher in 1997, in a dust-jacket which includes a painting by artist LeRoy Neiman. This book begins with a nostalgic appraisal of San Francisco in the 1940s. Here are the City of Paris, “a cynosure for shoppers from around the West,” the author’s parents at Club Lido, telephone operators in the age before computers, General MacArthur, the founder Werner Erhard, Kenneth Rexroth, Bill Graham, Dave Brubeck, Cal Tjader, and Carol Doda, “San Francisco’s famous silicone-enhanced nude” in a skimpy bikini granting an interview to the press. On the opposite page Jim Mitchell, “who killed his brother, Art...,” continues to provide live entertainment at his colorful Mitchell Bothers O’Farrell Theatre. We certainly cannot accuse Charles Fracchia of elitism. The magazine format of the second half of this book—“Profiles of businesses that have contributed to the beauty, structure, economic base and pleasure for the residents of the ‘City by the Bay’”—has an upbeat quality which may be its most charming and enduring contribution to local history. Over one hundred individuals, businesses, and corporations, beginning with Commercial & Interior Construction, Inc., and including E. G. Remodeling, FAO Schwartz, House of Prime Rib, Just Desserts, MacKenzie Automotive Parts Warehouse, and ending with Washington Square Bar & Grill, provide us with a lesson in what hard work and initiative can accomplish in San Francisco. Here, finally, women are triumphant. We meet, among many others, Robin Bradford, Sandy Nash, Roslyn Whitney, Martha Logan, Jane Wintersteen, and the charming Marti McMahon, “the only female who is the owner of her own fleet,” the very successful Pacific Marine Yachts anchored at Pier 39. Mrs. McMahon is, according to our author, “living proof that a woman does not have to give up her femininity to be successful in business.” Alas, William Camden was not able to say the same thing about his patroness, the formidable Queen Elizabeth I.

One more note. I differ with an assessment which Professor Fracchia includes in his evaluation of San Francisco’s Bowles/Sorokko Galleries. By no stretch of the imagination can we consider Mihail Chemiakin to be “Russia’s most influential Twentieth Century Artist.” All that glitters in high-priced galleries is not particularly enduring in the discerning world of the history of art. However, *de gustibus non est disputandum*. As Fracchia himself wrote at the end of *City By the Bay*, being

smart enough and lucky as we are to be living and working in San Francisco – “just sit back, relax and enjoy the show.”

ADELA SPINDLER ROATCAP



Chasing the Sun: Dictionary Makers and the Dictionaries They Made. Jonathon Green. Henry Holt & Company, New York. 510 pages; \$30.00

The Professor and the Madman. Simon Winchester. Harper Collins, New York. 242 pages; \$22.00

Samuel Johnson likened the pursuit of the perfect dictionary to the futile attempts of the mythical Arcadians to “chase the sun, which, when they had reached the hill where he seemed to rest, was still beheld at the same distance from them.” *Chasing the Sun* traces the history of dictionaries as well as the stories of people who wrote them, many of whom strove for this Arcadian perfection. The book contains many interesting and amusing anecdotes as well as solid factual material.

The literature of lexicography is not vast. In fact, *Chasing the Sun* is the only book of which I am aware to fully cover the entire field of dictionary history. Sidney Landau’s *Dictionary: The Art and Craft of Lexicography* is a fine book with an excellent chapter on history, but it is not as comprehensive as Green. DeWitt Starnes’s *The English Dictionary from Cawdrey to Johnson* covers the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in detail, but is at present out of print.

The earliest dictionaries were not monolingual books explaining words in the reader’s own language, but were bilingual and intended as translation aids. The credit for the first dictionary goes to the ancient Akkadians, who conquered the Sumerians in 2340 BCE. They recognized the cultural superiority of the Sumerians and constructed a bilingual word list to aid in learning their language. The first dictionary was written in cuneiform on twenty-four clay tablets and contained

9,700 entries. Words were arranged by topic. The concept of using the dictionary as a tool to help scholars to understand the works of their predecessors began here.

Moving ahead to the Middle Ages, Green relates how glossaries came into being. Like any language, Latin slowly changed with time, so that the Latin spoken by Medieval scholars had begun to diverge from that of the ancients they were studying. When he deciphered a difficult term, a scholar would write a gloss in the margin of the text to explain it. He might collect all of his glosses, translating from ancient to vulgar Latin, in a separate document. Eventually, the glosses for a number of such documents would be collected and combined into a glossary.

The earliest English dictionaries made no attempt to be complete, let alone perfect. They were lists of “hard words” meant to aid those who already had the basic language skills. The first of these to use English headwords was the *Promptorium Parvulorum sive Clericorum* (Treasure House for Youth or Clerks), compiled in 1440 by a monk known as Geoffrey the Grammarian. It listed about 12,000 words. The definitions were given in Latin, although English synonyms were sometimes given. After almost sixty years in manuscript, the *Promptorium* was printed in 1499 by Richard Pynson. Wynkyn de Worde published the next edition in 1510. This book is a valuable record of the English language in the early fifteenth century.

A Table Alphabeticall of...hard usual English Words... is generally acknowledged as the first monolingual English dictionary. It was compiled by Robert Cawdrey, a school teacher in Coventry, and published in 1604. The book was an octavo of 120 pages and offered only about 2,500 headwords. *A Table Alphabeticall* was probably not very useful. Many of its “definitions” consisted of little more than English endings tacked onto untranslatable Latin words. Because of this, it has been dismissed as merely a spelling book for adults. Even so, its very existence indicates that English had become respectable as a language for educated and cultured people.

The question of plagiarism of one lexicographer from another has arisen many times in the history of the dictionary. Green points out, however, that it is both impossible and impractical for a lexicographer to work completely independently. All dictionary writers have consulted their predecessors and attempted to expand and improve upon their entries. Green recalls the quip that to steal from one author is plagiarism, but to steal from many is research. Among the most interesting parts of *Chasing the Sun* is the story of those lexicographers who were accused of stealing from only one author. The most recent major “dictionary war”

was that between Noah Webster and Joseph Worcester. The latter was employed by Webster to help with the first edition of his *American Dictionary of the English Language*, which was published in 1828. Worcester published his own dictionary in 1830. Shortly afterwards, an article and several letters in *Palladium* accused Worcester of "gross plagiarism." The claim was that (*inter alia*) he had stolen 121 definitions from Webster. In rebuttal, Worcester gave the sources for these definitions and implied that Webster had stolen them from the same sources that he himself had used. The respective publishers also engaged in hostilities, but the controversy was never settled. Green's description of the contention makes fascinating reading.

Chasing the Sun gives extensive coverage to the lives and works of the famous lexicographers Samuel Johnson and James Murray (of the *Oxford English Dictionary*) as well as Noah Webster. All of the "lesser" English language dictionaries and their makers are discussed in adequate detail. Its reference list is not extensive, but includes the major works in the field. *Chasing the Sun* is not a bibliography of dictionaries, nor does it describe books in physical detail. It would have profited if more examples of entries from the dictionaries it discusses had been included. These quibbles aside, *Chasing the Sun* is an absolute "must" for collectors with an interest in dictionaries. I myself have found it to be very useful as a reference source. It is a serious book, not destined to be a best seller like the popular *The Professor and the Madman*. Nevertheless, Green writes well, and the book never bores or drags. Most bibliophiles will find it well worth while.

In 1879, James Murray, the newly chosen editor of the *Oxford English Dictionary*, sent out a request for help from volunteer readers. He needed hundreds of thousands of quotations from literature to illustrate the meaning and history of the words he was defining. One of his most prolific volunteers was William Minor. Although he was permanently confined to Broadmoor Criminal Lunatic Asylum near London, Minor's intellect was sufficiently intact for him to read voraciously and to contribute thousands of quotations. *The Professor and the Madman* tells the story of Murray, Minor, and the making of the dictionary.

Winchester's book is padded with irrelevant and redundant material. We are given four pages of American Civil War history as a prelude to an episode in Minor's life. The story of how Murray first discovers Minor's insanity by visiting him at Broadmoor is told twice. Only then are we informed that the story was a fiction knowingly invented by the press. Winchester then tells the true story, again twice. Imaginative details are added throughout. Somehow the author knows just

what sounds Minor heard when he first entered the asylum. He knows what Murray wore when he visited Minor, how his beard blew in the wind, and how his horses sweated.

Although *The Professor and the Madman* may be of little use to scholars, it is a light and entertaining read. Winchester's prose flows easily and the pages fly by. There are many interesting details about the making of the great dictionary, some fascinating examples of dictionary entries, and numerous anecdotes featuring James Murray.

ALLAN L. SMITH

A BOOK NOTE FROM RICHARD H. DILLON:

"What is so rare as a day in June?" Well, I'll tell you, and James Russell Lowell, too. It is either a newly published volume of regional bibliography or, even more rare, a book-length index in the general field of Western history, biography, and geography.

Long ago, California started out beautifully with the *Overland Monthly*, a sort of West Coast *Century Magazine*. Of late, we have had only *Sunset* as a real quality magazine here in Northern California. Luckily for us, Rosalie Muller Wright and her editorial predecessors have joined excellent regional travel articles, and even tidbits of popular history, to sections on food and gardening. In Southern California there used to be two first-rate magazines, but *Westways* is now but a shadow of its former self and *Desert Magazine* has been kaput for thirteen years. Files of these two journals are treasure troves of Californiana.

How lucky we are that Bob Clark at the Arthur H. Clark Company (P. O. Box 14707, Spokane, Washington 99214) has just bought out the *Desert Magazine Subject Index* by Tom Budlong and Joan Brooks. The 525-page finding tool (\$65) covers all issues of Randall Henderson's informative magazine from beginning to end, 1937-1985, and even the issues of an ill-fated 1992-93 successor, *American Desert Magazine*. Here is the key to a lot of human history as well as natural history of the arid southeast corner of our state. Illustrations, maps, and book reviews added value to the feature articles of the magazine. All articles are neatly cross-indexed by author, title, and subject. This is an absolutely essential volume for anyone seriously interested in our desert country.

~Exhibition Note

The Club recently hosted an exhibition, *Twenty Years of Books from the Press of Peter and Donna Thomas*. Over forty books were on display to illustrate the Thomases' career as book artists. From their earliest work, *The Three Cedars* (1978), to their most recent, *Architectural Concepts* (1998), the exhibit documented all aspects of their art and craft as papermakers, artists, printers, and bookbinders.

Many Club members are familiar with the Press of Peter and Donna Thomas of Santa Cruz. Peter and Donna established their press in 1976 and printed their first book, *The Three Cedars*, under the imprint The Good Book Press. The book features three short stories by Peter and is illustrated with an etching by Donna. It was printed in an edition of thirty copies on Peter's handmade paper and is bound in Donna's hand-spun, hand-woven wool cloth. The Thomases' books are distinguished in this manner as collaborative efforts that demonstrate their endeavor to create the whole book in its multi-faceted forms.

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Also on display at The Book Club was Peter and Donna's first miniature book, *Yotan's Vision* (1981), along with *The Poet is Dead* (1987) by William Everson (their last book printed under the Good Book Press imprint), and *A Collection of Paper Samples from Hand Papermills in the U.S.A.* (1993). The latter work was recently included in the traveling exhibit "Paper Bound," organized by the Guild of Book Workers. The Book Club exhibit also featured two series of miniature books, *The Traveling Library* (housing eighteen miniature books) and *The Renaissance Pleasure Faire: Typographic Print Series* (1979–1988).

In an evening slide lecture at the Club that coincided with the opening of the exhibit, Peter and Donna shared the history of their press and the inspiration for their books. They began by selling handmade blank books and teaching paper-making at Renaissance Faires. With the success of their blank books and their growing interest in the book arts, Peter and Donna started printing. Peter spoke of the inspiration that he derived from the books of the great private presses. From this inspiration came his desire to consider the form, structure, texture, and content of the book as a whole, rather than to see the book as merely a container of information.

Peter and Donna have long been active in regional and national printing associations. Needless to say, their books are also very popular among collectors of miniature books. Recently their work *Almost Paper* was recognized as a 1998 Distinguished Book Award Winner by the Miniature Book Society. According to the Thomases, "The book is the summation of all art. There is sculpture and architecture in the binding, dance in the structure, music in the sequence of pages, visual art in the illustrations, literature in the text, and drama in the collaboration of skills required to produce it." The Thomases' books are indeed a realization of this vision. Many thanks to Peter and Donna and to Jack MacLean and the Exhibitions Committee for another fine exhibit.

JOHN HAWK



The first century of children's books in California was commemorated in an exhibit which opened in December. James Silverman, a children's book historian, lent an array of remarkable volumes, including several of the "Inglenook Series" produced by A. Roman in the 1870s. Also from A. Roman came *A Boy's Trip Across the Plains* (to California) by Laura Preston (1868) and *Phebe Travers; or One Year at a French Boarding School* by Aunt Florida (1870). It is hard to single out books from

the range on display – Gold Rush tales, adventures, fairy stories, myths, songs, all with a California connection, most appealingly illustrated. *The Hidden Treasure* and *Songs of Chinese Children* came from Suttonhouse; *The Adventures of Maidlie* from Eugene Maclean of San Francisco, 1926; *The Treasure Chest of the Medranos* from Wallace Hebbard of Santa Barbara, 1927, as well as the later (1942) *Allan and Brenda on a Clipper*. San Francisco's Paul Elder produced *Half-True Stories* and *How to Tell the Birds from the Flowers* (1907). One of the better-known illustrators of children's books, Willy Pogany, was represented by Harriet Smith Hawley's *The Goose Girl of Nürnberg* (Suttonhouse, 1936). Two charmers came from publishers in Sacramento: *Down the Mother Lode*, by Vivia Hemphill, from Purnell's, 1922, and *Twilight Fairy Tales*, by May Showler Groves, with illustrations by Mary Crete Crouch, from Jo Anderson, 1914. The Ward Ritchie Press was represented by the delightful *The Borrowed Canoe*, a Hupa Indian tale written and illustrated by Elsa Falk.

Mr. Silverman shared his enthusiasm and knowledge for his subject in a December 7th public program with slides. His listeners were treated to a keepsake: a facsimile of the remarkable arithmetic text printed in 1836 by Don Agustin V. Zamorano, *Tablas Para Los Niños Que Empiezan A Contar*—one of the first school books to be printed in California.

Many thanks to James Silverman for both the exhibit and the evening presentation; and thanks, again, to Jack Maclean and the Exhibitions Committee.

As we prepare this issue for the press, Jack Maclean is organizing an exhibition of the work of Thomas Bewick. Club member Geraldine Cole and others will lend items from their collections of this superb English wood-engraver, and we look forward to seeing examples of the odder uses to which his exquisite designs have been put, including demi-tasses and coasters!

~Gifts & Acquisitions

Through the generosity of our almost full-time worker, Barbara Land, the Library has received an important "new" (1998) book, *American Proprietary Typefaces*, published by the American Printing History Association and printed for them by the Stinehour Press in an edition of 720 copies, of which 120 were specially bound and contain broadsides printed at various printers. This book was designed by Jerry Kelley and has, in addition to its 176 pages of letterpress, a thirty-six page

section printed in offset containing all of the typefaces discussed in this important book, by various fine printers. This is a handsome addition to our collection of fine printing and we are, of course, delighted—and thankful to dear Barbara for this most welcome gift.

* * *

Printing and the Mind of Merker: A Bibliographical Study by Sidney E. Berger. Printed by the Stinehour Press for the Grolier Club, 1997. Two editions were produced, the first (our copy) softbound, with 100 copies, and fifty special copies with press sheets from Merker's printing. Berger wrote the preface as well as "Incidental to the Hand Process." This is followed by Dana Gioia's study of Kim Merker as literary publisher and by "A Pushy Apprentice" by Harry Duncan. "Part One: Books and Pamphlets" is a catalogue of Merker's work at his various presses—the Penumbra Press, the Stone Wall Press, and the Windhover Press. The essays, especially that of Harry Duncan, and the bibliography of Merker's work make this volume an important addition to our collection of contemporary fine American printing.

* * *

From author Gary F. Kurutz, mainstay of the Club's publishing program, we have received a copy of his *California Pastorale*, being selected photographs, 1860-1925, lithographed and published by the Windgate Press, Sausalito, California, and manufactured for them in Seattle, type and lithography done for them at the Publisher's Press, Salt Lake City, 1997. This is a most interesting book for a selection of excellent and beautifully reproduced photographs, surprisingly priced at only \$40 plus tax. This is the first real facsimile photography book we have on "early" California. (A review will appear in the next issue.)

And our thanks again to Gary for a small book printed and published (again) by The Windgate Press, a book honoring (in effect) the late Dr. Albert Shumate, a new edition of his *Francisco Pacheco*. This charming small book (6" x 9") of sixty pages is bound in a wrap-around of green buckram. Gary tells us that Dr. Shumate was able to read the printer's proofs before his death last September. We are of course delighted to have this final "say" from the world-renowned authority on California, and it now becomes a welcome part of our collection on California history.

* * *

We were saddened to read of the death of member Morris A. Gelfand in October last at the age of ninety. Morris was a regular contributing member to the Club's library whenever he visited here. His last gift was a copy of his de luxe edition of *Bruce Rogers, American Typographer*. In acknowledgment of our thank-you here, he wrote that publications of the Stone House Press would be available through The Veatchs - Arts of the Book, Box 328, Northampton, Massachusetts 01060. He continued: "Now on the verge of its 20th year of printing and publishing, The Stone House Press will continue its work at a new location, The Printerie, a hundred-year-old letterpress shop in Oyster Bay, N.Y., where much of its type and equipment has been installed. Announcements of new publications will come from the Press. Billing and shipping will be done by The Veatchs."

ALBERT SPERISEN

The Club has just received from Wolfgang Lederer a wonderful example of fairly modern German fine-press printing, the Berliner Handpresse edition of Friedrich Gundolf's *Für Natzel und Ditzel*, with linocut illustrations by Wolfgang Joerg and Erich Schoenig, printed in Berlin in 1968. The edition was 350 copies, of which this is number 152; it is signed by the illustrators. The illustrations are very harmonious with a text about God and the world, and the book is one of the few examples of German private press books in our collection. Thank you again to Wolfgang for an unusual example of German folio printing.

BARBARA JANE LAND

Jack Walsdorf, Club member and Vice President for Library Relations at Blackwell's Book Services, sent us a delightful holiday present: *The Choice of Books* by John Lubbock, a reproduction of the volume originally produced in 1896 by Henry Altemus of Philadelphia. The author complains that many people "read almost by hazard. They will take any book they chance to find... in a friend's house; they will buy a novel at a railway-stall if it has an attractive title; indeed, I believe in some cases even the binding affects their choice." Shocking. When we have recovered, we might consider spending time with a few from Mr. Lubbock's "100 Greatest Books," from which "Works by Living Authors are omitted." Is it time to curl up, like Jeeves, with Spinoza or Marcus Aurelius? Or perhaps, recalling Mr. Boffin and Mr. Wegg, to Decline and Fall? Mr. Lubbock approves all of Scott's novels and makes them one entry, so we might consider starting with *The Anti-*

quary and progressing to *Woodstock*, by which time we should be ready for Carlyle's *French Revolution*. (As Sara Crewe, the Little Princess, exclaimed, "I have so wanted to read that!") Thank you, Mr. Walsdorf and Blackwell's.



From Patrick W. Ames of Octavo Corporation, the Club has received the gift of its first CD-ROM, the *Kelmscott Press Geoffrey Chaucer: The Works Now Newly Imprinted*. It was truly astonishing to have this work of William Morris's book art from 1896 before us on the workaday computer screen. Octavo Corporation has an ambitious program of producing such electronic marvels, and already has made available such rarities as Bodoni's *Manuale Tipografico* and the 1640 edition of Shakespeare's *Poems*; check their web site for more information: www.octavo.com

ANN WHIPPLE

~Serendipity

musings from the committee chairman:

We have long enjoyed the descriptions of books and fine printers in Emmett Harrington's catalogues. On October 8, 1998, we wandered in to his newly opened shop at 251 Post Street, Suite 312 (415/646-0060), rejoicing over the arrival of a new Western American downtown. Warmed and invigorated with coffee brewed as it should be by an old Navy man, and with Catalogue 12 in our hands, we even bought some books! We could not resist a copy of Warden James A. Johnston's *Alcatraz Island Prison* (1949) for the light it shed on banking traditions. Warden Johnston obviously learned all he knew as Vice President of American Trust Company—in the days that rank had meaning, and we work for the successor bank.

Into our clutches, too, went a copy of Al Shumate's *Francisco Pacheco* (1977), just reprinted with additional material (Dr. Shumate did proof the proofs) by Windgate Press at \$12. We keep a special lookout for the works of the "Dean of San Francisco Historians." On a cold, dreary October 1, we heard the doleful news of Doctor Shumate's death the day before. Even the company flag did not fly from the former Bank of America headquarters on Kearny Street. Perhaps to compensate, at Al's memorial service on the 6th, the sun shone brightly forth, making St. Dominic's stained glass windows glow with life. As others more astute than ourselves remarked, Al Shumate was "timeless; he mattered." No more shall we see that

slight figure of our Past President at ninety-four in Publication Committee meetings, impeccably dressed in a brown suit, hat, and immaculately groomed. Nor shall we hear Al, with unfailing politeness and humor, deliver a few concise, pointed words on a topic, or relate a relevant incident of sixty years ago. We miss him!

We wish Emmett success—especially after he praised the *QN-L*! The longer he is there, the more flotsam and jetsam of nineteenth-century California pamphlets, manuscripts, billheads, magazines, and other good stuff will coalesce as ephemera files, and we can return to being a bottom-feeder.

Fewer than fifty copies remain of Gary Kurutz's *The California Gold Rush*—already described modestly in the November 1998 catalogue of Dawson's Book Shop as "now universally accepted as the standard bibliography on the subject." Dealers, recognizing quality, now offer it between \$200 and \$250! Buy now at the member price of \$110 and save up to \$140. Similarly, historian Oscar Lewis's selection of his own writings, *A Widely Cast Net*, is \$90 for members, and \$150 in booksellers' catalogues.

Oscar Lewis (1893–1992), that mainstay of The Book Club from 1921 on, was a writer's writer. Printer Susan Acker presents a crisp, clean book complementing a graceful flowing of words infused with whimsy; the "output of a fairly active scribbler." Lewis decided "to cast the net widely, to make the book a survey of the kinds of writing a freelance author is likely to produce during a long career."

A Boy's Life story of 1915 and a 1917 sketch of Bay Area landmarks cropping up in Jack London's works are the earliest pieces in this selected sampling. Many from the 1920s, a learned 1934 dissertation on "Mug Books," and a 1947 BCC tribute to that printer-showman John Henry Nash follow. The last, chronologically, is a rrrribbeting 1986 BCC keepsake on the Angel's Camp Jumping Frog Contest, the target of one of Lewis's many epigrams: "Few subjects [are] so serious that they won't be improved by a touch of humor," he says, "provided such material seems to belong, and hasn't been dragged in by the heels, protesting all the way." This column should take heed.

Of course, even dealers' prices are bargains compared to what the original editions of Book Club reprints would go for. Only two copies are known of Mrs. J. W. Likens's *Six Years Experience as a Book Agent* (1992, \$50), and only four of *Artful Deeds*, a Peter Koch production just issued on November 2. The BCC price of \$95 is probably a hundredth of what an original would cost—if one ever came up for sale. This rare 1853 pamphlet tells a tale of Gold Rush desperado Grovenor Layton,

with a marvelous cut of his lynching on June 17, 1852, at the hands of a Sonora Vigilance Committee. Our Publications Committee chairman constantly remarks, "Layton is the first BCC author to give his life to produce a book for us."

However, before too many tears are shed for this unfortunate criminal, the versatile and not-hanged Dick Dillon reveals in a masterful introduction that not only is Grovenor Layton a fictional character, but so is the recorded author, A.R. Orton! Dillon, who has constantly produced quality works for the past half-century, received an accolade on November 2nd as "one of the greatest living California narrative historians." It was promptly amended from the floor to "the greatest."

As Dillon observes, Layton was "meant to represent a whole class of genuine Forty-Niners," those "nice young men—turned desperadoes." As we read in our morning paper how in 1906 explorer Dr. Frederick Cook claimed to be the first to climb Mount McKinley and proved it with a photograph—"The Top of Our Continent"—now shown to have been taken on "Fake Peak," 15,000 feet below the summit, we reflect upon Dillon. "There is nothing rare about hoaxes in Western Americana," he says. "They come with the territory."

Yet, the fictional Layton-Orton did leave clues to Eastern manufacture of *Artful Deeds*—in Dillon's modest opinion, "a humbug, a hoax, a bogus biography." With tongues broadly in cheek, their multiple personality had Layton commit a crime impossible in California. As Grovenor spirals downward from check forger and murderer, he becomes a banker, first in Sacramento and then Stockton. Layton exchanged forged \$50 bills from the distant Banks of the States of Missouri and Ohio with homeward-bound "unsuspecting miners" for "their hard-earned 'dust.'" Grovenor paid them in paper, Orton recounts, "at the rate of seventeen dollars per ounce, when other bankers were paying only sixteen dollars." Counterfeiting banknotes was a common Eastern pastime, but would not do in hard-money California—"sanded" dust was the Golden State scam.

The "many dupes" got their just desserts, since the 1849 state constitution forbade anyone from "creating paper to circulate as money," and in 1851, the price of dust among all gold-buyers had risen to \$17 coin. The next year, while Grovenor engaged in this "most cunningly devised and executed scheme of villainy," miners could consult "Tables for Receiving and Paying Gold Dust at \$17 per Ounce" in the April 1852 Stockton city directory. Let's have a sell-out of this rip-roaring story, a splendid example of the popular—but fake—books telling Easterners of the Gold Rush.

The Western History Association met in Sacramento this year, and The Book Club printed an extra one-thousand copies of the 1998 Keepsake to distribute. Recipients were most appreciative; now to see if they join up! On Friday, October 16, this same Dillon chaired a session on "Collecting the West" loaded with BCC members on the panel and in the audience. David Farmer of the DeGolyer Library described how Texas oilmen Everett DeGolyer and Earl Vandale went into Western books, thanks to guidance from notable book dealers. Farmer himself grew up on a ranch with books and cattle in his blood—perhaps a cause of mad cow disease—and is a co-editor of *A Trumpet of Our Own* (BCC 1981, \$42.50), a selection from Cherokee John Rollin Ridge's writings. Michael Dawson does not need not be identified as he is the third generation connected with the famed Dawson's Book Shop of Los Angeles. Photographs are his specialty, and daily he deals with the conflict between catalogue and computer. Businessman Robert G. McCubbin of El Paso has assembled a vast library and the greatest photographic collection of Western outlaws and lawmen. In a droll manner, he noted that he began collecting at fifteen and now has "gone through four generations of dealers." That is a bookman! McCubbin is always willing to share with fellow collectors and historical researchers.

This session led to the inevitable debate: Does greater joy come from spotting a long-sought treasure on a book shop shelf before you, or having a ghostly specter appear on a glowing computer monitor? We take great delight in rooting through the debris field of the Argonaut Book Shop, often emerging with strange pieces of ephemera. Proprietor Bob Haines often asks, "Why do you want *that*?" and just as often we are unable to give a reply, except that it intrigued us. On our piece for the 1998 Keepsake, we illustrated our J.W. Bone letter from a stray issue of the *The Wasp* supplied by Bob Haines, and when we are drafted to give lectures, viewers see slides of very unusual things!

Recently, we were in Randall House, a Santa Barbara institution, and acquired several grouped items to get one book we had sought for twenty years. While we were gloating, genial proprietor and BCC member Ron Randall asked us a biographical question about a letter-writer. Books quickly revealed some information, but even more quickly, Pia Oliver printed a full biography off the Internet! Even though the shop is an historic adobe, very little of their trade is walk-in. The computer age has brought the world to them.

We are also not averse when a dealer puts something aside for us. BCC mem-

ber Ken Harrison routinely finds Civil War California stuff that we had only read about in the 1860s press. We also get the same charge of discovery when we spot an unseen nugget described in a catalogue. We often go through weeks of anguished waiting and hopeful yearning if the desired item appears in a mail-bid auction! We can think readily of a half-dozen of our prized letters and ephemera that have arrived this way. That catalogues are few and far between helps curtail our spending; we do not know what we would do with temptation before us daily.

We, though, are of an age where our youngest (15) is the family computer wizard; for the “.Com Generation” the Internet is second nature. A formerly skeptical but more technologically advanced friend related an Internet bonanza. Dick Olson, who collects western publications by the University of Oklahoma Press, saw where a West Virginia antique shop wished to clear out an item sitting on a back shelf for some fifteen years. A nominal price brought a set of four phonograph records issued by the University Extension Program in 1951. On them, famed historian Edward Everett Dale narrated the formation of Oklahoma, and now University of Oklahoma experts scramble to document these records! Well, to use a cliché, “Gold is where you find it,” but as readers know, we never use clichés (In a horn!)

Meantime, at the Western History Association, Vince Lozito continually manned The Book Club of California booth, distributing the Gold Rush Camps keepsake, showing off our publications, and dispensing information. Mike Harrison, the youngster of the crowd (101 on December 13, but we keep telling him the first hundred years do not count), sold one copy of the Kurutz bibliography to a grateful customer, while Vince sold only ten.

“For someone who consumed red wine in the quantities I did,” San Francisco poet laureate Lawrence Ferlinghetti quipped recently, “it was reason enough to see what was here,” and so he came to the Bay City. For those who wish to survey the landscape, the University of California Press issued in 1998 Charles L. Sullivan’s *A Companion to California Wine*.” (\$39.95). Some thirty years in the making, Sullivan’s volume is an excellent and imaginative encyclopedia of wines, vines, and vineyards. Looking under the entry for Thomas Jordan’s Alexander Valley establishment, we find, “Possibly because the wine is easily drinkable when young, it was noted that, in restaurants, Jordan’s was the best-selling Cabernet Sauvignon in the United States in 1992.” Our wife agreed, and therefore another book openly joined our library. We are grateful booksellers neatly wrap purchases in brown paper.

While we were sipping a world-class California beverage, recollecting that premium wines were one of the good things to come out of the 1960s, our eye fell on a review of the latest by Robert Mondavi, the forward-writer to the BCC's 1994 *The Vineyards and Wine Cellars of California* by Thomas Hardy. After re-inserting said eye, we read on. "No one has been more closely associated with the California wine revolution than Robert Mondavi," is the way Frank Prial began his *New York Times* critique of Mondavi's autobiographical *Harvests of Joy: My Passion for Excellence; How the Good Life Became Great Business* (New York: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1998; \$27). Prial then adds the clincher: "Probably because he started it." Mondavi, like Agoston Haraszthy a century before him, declares, "Wine is art. It's culture. It's the essence of civilization and the Art of Living." The headline succinctly proclaims, "For Mondavi [85], It's Still Full Speed Ahead," making this a "must" for collectors developing their libraries of current wine history. We add that good wines are like fine books: Rare. No copies of Australian Hardy's 1885 work are in the United States; BCC members have the opportunity to add this wonderfully illustrated book, ably edited by noted wine historian Thomas Pinney, to their libraries for \$155.

Speaking of that Hungarian "Father of California Wine," Brian McGinty writes ably about his great-great-grandfather in *Strong Wine: The Life and Legend of Agoston Haraszthy* (Stanford University Press, 1998, \$65). Revisionist wine historians Pinney and Sullivan take great exception to some of Haraszthy's alleged accomplishments, since he never met a title or tale he did not like, and son Arpad embellished the legend. Yet, Haraszthy was not just hot air. At Buena Vista, he built the first cellars and stone wineries on the largest vineyard with the greatest collection of foreign vines in the state—planted in rows four feet apart, half the traditional California distance. Good wine was his crusade, and he encouraged others to plant grapes, wrote the first American pamphlet on European wine growing, and presided over numerous agricultural and wine societies.

When Haraszthy departed Buena Vista in 1867 and Emil Dresel became superintendent, the difference in outlook became quite apparent. Though a brother was a respected winemaker in Hochheim, Germany, and Dresel had owned a Sonoma vineyard since 1858, by occupation he was an architect and the artistic half of the famed California view-makers, Kuchel & Dresel. Baffled by a mysterious vine-killer, identified years later as the dreadful root-louse *Phylloxera*, Dresel returned the rows to eight feet apart by plowing up the European wine stock. What was left?

The pre-Haraszthy condition of common black Mission grapes – which all agreed produced poor wine!

We were gladdened to see a Western history book reviewed in the San Francisco *Chronicle*, and by BCC member JoAnn Levy. In 1977, Yale professor Howard R. Lamar produced *The Reader's Encyclopedia of the American West*. After twenty years, Lamar has brought forth *The New Encyclopedia of the American West* (Yale, 1998, 1,324 pages; \$60). What's new? Lamar has transformed the West from a fixed geological region to the concept of "frontier." He begins at Jamestown, Virginia, and heads toward the setting sun. The increased scope gives rise to some anomalies. For instance, Pocahontas has an entry—but not Sarah Winnemucca; Fort Brooke, Florida, is there, but not Fort Churchill, Nevada. Again a headline summation is pertinent: "An Expansive, Idiosyncratic Encyclopedia of the West."

Another book to note is Quintard Taylor's good narrative history *In Search of the Racial Frontier: African Americans in the American West, 1528 to 1990* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 1998; \$29.95). Taylor sees it an "introduction for African American westerners," who "can finally work out their shared destiny with the region's other westerners under that open sky"—an open sky that encompasses nineteen states west of the Missouri River. BCC member Rudy Lapp's *Blacks in Gold Rush California* (1979 and reprinted 1997) comes in for praise as "by far the most comprehensive survey of African Americans in ante-bellum California."

November 29, 1998, marked the centennial of the birth of Clive Staples "Jack" Lewis. C.S. Lewis emerged from the hell of the trenches of the War to End All War to find God. We have long enjoyed the devilish humor of the *The Screwtape Letters* (1942) and the seven books of the *Chronicles of Narnia* from the 1950s; while *Till We Have Faces* (1956) is the favorite of a daughter of ours.

A copy of *Ephemera News* came within our purview, and the cover of a book reviewed caught our attention: Joseph Rosenblum's *The Prince of Forgers: The Incredible Story of Vrain Lucas, who created over 27,000 literary forgeries and sold them for millions and the glory of France!* (\$45) Reviewer (and editor) Michelle McGrath quipped that after prominent collectors accepted the documents as genuine, Lucas's tale is "a profound reminder of the gullibility of experts." Our observation is that a collector can never know too much about a subject – and when you find enlightenment, write up an article for the *QN-L*!

To help achieve expertise in historical and literary areas, two free lecture series are available in Southern and Northern California. As noted in the last *QN-L*, in

the Southland, the Congress of History of San Diego and Imperial Counties (which were one county until 1907) is sponsoring six seminars on "The Literary History of San Diego" on Saturdays between October 10, 1998, and March 13, 1999. All will be available on the Internet to entice writers in the two California counties and Baja California. For Northern California, noted historians commemorate the memory of Rodman Paul with a series of fifteen free lectures in Sacramento (State University, State Archives; and Main Library) on Wednesdays at 7 P.M. between October 14, 1998 and October 20, 1999. For those unable to journey to the City of the Plain, moderator Kenneth Owens intends to publish them as *The California Gold Rush: A Sesquicentennial Reexamination*.

Curator Scott A. Shield's article on Gold Rush pictorial letter sheets in the San Francisco Historical Society's Fall *Argonaut* reminds us that the California Historical Society exhibit opened on January 21, 1999. The sixty items invite viewers until May 22. The December *Biblio* displays an illustrated end paper on decorative end papers prepared by BCC immediate past president Joanne Sonnichsen. More importantly, the French book that sparked this activity has led her to edit a future BCC Keepsake on this visually enjoyable subject. The January *Biblio* follows with the BCC's own titanical Gloria Stuart on the cover, holding a composing stick. After Stuart left a famed White Star liner on April 15, 1912, she began a notable career as a fine printer. In this column, The Book Club of California gets the last word!

ROBERT J. CHANDLER

Lawrence Ferlinghetti at USF: Is Poetry News?

It is well-nigh impossible to convince college students to come out on a warm, sunny Sunday afternoon to hear poetry. Yet, out they (and others) came on December 6, 1998, as San Francisco's first Poet Laureate, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, spent an hour in conversation with Father Alberto Huerta at the Monihan Room of the University of San Francisco's Gleeson Library. Book Club of California member Marianne Hinckle, in her capacity as President of the Gleeson Library Associates, offered a welcome, and Kevin Starr, California State Librarian, provided an introduction. To commemorate this event, Marianne Hinckle designed a handsome folio-sized keepsake and printed it at her Año Nuevo Island Press. The poem "Great American Waterfront" from Ferlinghetti's 1979 *Who Are We Now?* was printed on the cover page, beginning with a reproduction of a mail steamer from the January 1858 edition of *Hutchings' California Magazine*.

For those who have not kept up with poetry news, Mr. Ferlinghetti was nominated Poet Laureate by Mayor Willie Brown on August 11, 1998. His inaugural speech was delivered to an enthusiastic crowd assembled at San Francisco's Main Library on October 13, 1998. In addition to producing fourteen books of poetry, fiction, translations, plays, and essays, Ferlinghetti is co-owner of City Lights Books in North Beach, a serious publisher and an avid expressionist painter. His canvases were on exhibition at the Gleeson's brand-new Thatcher Art Gallery.

The poet suggested in his inaugural speech that he write a column called "Poetry as News," and our *San Francisco Chronicle* has taken him up on it. Look for Ferlinghetti's "Poetry as News" in the Book Review section. He has a redoubtable job before him. William Carlos Williams said it first:

*It is difficult
to get the news from poems
yet men die miserably every day
For lack
Of what is found there.*

ADELA SPINDLER ROATCAP

In *The Wayzgoose Gazette* for December 1998, the International Printing Museum reports that a temporary home in the city of Carson, south of Los Angeles, will be opening for the best of the Museum's world-class collection on printing history. They hope eventually to secure a permanent home in the vicinity of Olvera Street in historic downtown Los Angeles. The great feature of this current exhibition is the magnificent Ernest A. Lindner collection of antique printing machinery, said to be the best in the world. A celebration for the re-opening at the Carson site (315 Torrance Boulevard; telephone 714-529-1832) was held in January, and the exhibition will be open on Fridays and Saturdays.

ALBERT SPERISEN

Under the name of Bradstreet Press, Nancy Hoyt, member of the Club's Board of Directors, is the publisher of a noteworthy small volume, *The Good Lion*, by Ernest Hemingway. This children's story set in Venice was created some half a century ago by Hemingway for Gherardo Scapinelli, the small son of a Venetian acquaintance,

artist Francesca Ivancich Scapinelli. The story was published in 1950, with illustrations by Signora Scapinelli, and her sister Adriana Ivancich illustrated the tale when it appeared a year later in *Holiday* magazine. This edition, the first in English in book form, is limited to 250 copies and is graced by a series of illustrations created especially for it by Signora Scapinelli. The book was printed on a hand-press by Foolscap Press of Santa Cruz and bound by Cardoza-James of San Francisco. With its delicate drawing of the Lion of St. Mark on the cover and its soft Italian colors, the volume is instantly appealing. Notes from Nancy Hoyt and from Arrigo Cipriani put the story in its historical context. Signior Cipriani writes: "Hemingway was above all great in the small things." *The Good Lion* may be a small thing, but it is worthy of its author. Order from the publisher at 2480 Union Street, San Francisco, California 94123, or from Richard Hilkert, Bookseller, 333 Hayes Street, San Francisco, California 94102.



Joseph D'Ambrosio sends word that only twelve copies remain of his latest work, one that has absorbed his energies for some time. This is *Christus Apollo* by Ray Bradbury, designed and printed by D'Ambrosio in an edition of fifty copies, signed by the author and the artist. "It is a book of boxes," D'Ambrosio writes. "Nine boxes are bound between two hard covers. The depth of the box allows for a collage effect of crumpled colored handmade papers of color, shape, and texture, which surrounds the eye while reading the text. The book is presented in a clam-shell (side-hinged) box which appears to be a book in itself. The size is small octavo." This inventive book-artist has taken his medium to new territory. For information: Gold Stein Press, P.O. Box 10358, Newport Beach, California 92658-0358; telephone (949) 644-2560.



Of Northern California interest: The 1999 schedule of classes sponsored by the Friends of Calligraphy is available from the course coordinator, Georgianna Greenwood, 1526 McGee Avenue, Berkeley, California 94703; telephone (510) 841-6924. Instructors are Monica Dengo, Ward Dunham, Georgianna Greenwood, Thomas Ingmire, and Kathy McNicholas, all calligraphers of note; classes are held at Fort Mason in San Francisco.

A NOTE FROM WILDER BENTLEY THE YOUNGER:

Remembering the beautiful plaque adorning the Club's entryway, does anyone know of others done by our artist, Mallette Dean, or commemorative plaques by him or any other artist? For a project, we would like to hear of the location and the artist's name. We are most interested in carvings that incorporate image and text in one composition.

Responses may be sent to Mr. Bentley at Box 575, Occidental, California 95465.



Book Club members: Remember that the Club is open on Monday evenings (holidays excepted) from 5 to 7 p.m. Foregather, relax, converse, and enjoy the current exhibit.



Contributors to this issue

RICHARD H. DILLON, historian and Mill Valley Resident, is a frequent contributor to *QN-L*.

DR. ADELA SPINDLER ROATCAP, a member of the faculty of the University of San Francisco since 1984, teaches the history of art and writes about fine books and printing.

ALLEN L. SMITH is a physician and Book Club member who lives in Pleasanton, California.

JOHN HAWK is Special Collections Librarian of the Donohue Rare Books Room in the Gleeson Library, University of San Francisco.

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Prof. Mark S. Still	Redwood City	Rudolph Lapp
Dr. Gregory Thompson	Salt Lake City, UT	Vincent J. Lozito

The following members have transferred from regular to sustaining status:

Norman Coliver	San Francisco
Ernest D. Peixotto	Palm City, FL
Klaus-Ullrich Röttscher	Berkeley
James B. Swinerton	San Francisco

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